


Fifty Questions and Answers on BRAZIL

By

BENJAMIN H. HUNNICUTT
LAVRAS, MINAS, BRAZIL





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What Do You Know About Brazil?

When we begin to try and answer a series of questions about a country we realize fully how little we know. In asking these questions about Brazil, the motive is to inspire curiosity, and investigation that suitable replies may be given. If you are not in full agreement with the replies given, do a little investigation on your own account and verify the facts.

Edison has made the quiz famous, and there is no doubt about its usefulness. One makes a greater effort to obtain information under pressure of questioning than one does under simple reading of statements. Some of the questions asked may seem foolish, but practical experience has proved that all of these, and even simpler ones are asked about Brazil.

1. *What language is spoken in Brazil?*

Almost everyone thinks that Spanish is spoken all over South America, and in all Latin America. It happens that just half the people of South America do not speak Spanish, but Portuguese. Brazil occupies half the area of South America, and has about half the population of the continent. The two languages are somewhat similar. A person who speaks Portuguese easily understands Spanish, while Spanish speaking people have much more difficulty in understanding Portuguese. Portuguese is a beautifully expressive language, and very much more phonetic than English.

2. *When was Brazil discovered?*

The official date celebrated as the discovery of the country is May the third, the year generally accepted being that of 1500.

3. *By whom was it discovered?*

The great area now occupied by Brazil was first touched by a Portuguese navigator, Pedro Alves Cabral. Later many efforts were made by other navigators to claim this discovery, but history accepts Cabral as the first to arrive.

4. *What was Brazil's mother country?*

As Brazil was discovered by a Portuguese navigator, this country spared no efforts to establish her dominion. France and Holland made efforts to claim and establish themselves, but their men were repulsed and gradually Portugal developed Brazil as her most profitable colony. Compare on the map the size of Portugal with that of Brazil. You will at once be reminded

of the comparison between England and the United States. There are many other similarities between the two mother countries and the American ex-colonies.

Even the language as spoken by the Portuguese has that characteristic difference from that spoken by the Brazilian, as is noticed as to the way English is spoken in England and in the United States.

5. *How long has Brazil been an independent country?*

On September the seventh, 1922, the first centennial of Brazilian independence was celebrated. One hundred years before the then reigning monarch for the mother country declared the colonies independent and he became the first emperor of the new monarchy, as this was the form of government established. During these hundred years of independence much greater progress has been made than was ever achieved during the three hundred years under Portuguese dominance.

And this progress has not all been simply because the world as a whole was moving forward by the impulse of new inventions and new means of transportation. Portugal ruled the colonies with an iron hand, and was more interested in extracting heavy taxes and increasing the flow of gold to her coffers, than she was in the development of the people or the progress of her new territories.

6. *How long has slavery been abolished?*

This question, of course, implies that slavery did exist in Brazil. The African traffic was instituted by the Portuguese from their colonies on that continent at an early date in the colonization period, and conditions somewhat similar to those in the Southern United States grew up. After many decades of abolition propaganda and the passing of certain mitigating laws, emancipation was decreed on May 13, 1888. It is not necessary to dwell upon the importance of this step in the development of the nation.

7. *How and by whom was it abolished?*

The abolition of slavery in the United States cost us the losses and sufferings of a civil war, but in Brazil it was accomplished by the passing of a law in parliament, without bloodshed. The decree was signed by Princess Isabel, who was reigning in the absence of her father, Emperor D. Pedro the Second.

8. *What is the form of government now?*

Much discontent was felt towards the monarchical form of government, and republican propaganda was instigated in the early half of the nineteenth century. Finally the revolution which established the republic came about in 1889, one year after the freedom of the slaves, and it was accomplished almost without bloodshed.

November the fifteenth, 1889, is given as the founding of the Republic of Brazil. The transition from one form of government

to the other was brought about without undue friction. As the country had its progress accelerated with the establishment of its independence, the same occurred with the republic.

The constitution adopted was very liberal, based in many parts on that of the United States of America.

9. *What is the area of Brazil, compared with that of the United States?*

Brazil is somewhat larger than the United States proper. The encyclopedias give the United States as having 2,970,038 square miles, and Brazil with 3,218,139 square miles. The area of Brazil is not so accurately known as that of the United States. Efforts are now being made for mapping accurately all the states.

When we remember that there are only 20 states in Brazil, one small territory, and a Federal District, and that some of the states are small, then some of the states must be enormous. At least one Brazilian state is several times as large as Texas. This largest state has only 360,000 inhabitants. This means a density of population of less than 1/5 of an inhabitant per square kilometer.

10. *How many inhabitants has Brazil?*

The first real census of Brazil, according to modern conceptions of the term, was realized in 1920. The total population of the country according to this census being 30,635,605. In 1872 the figures given are 10,112,061 and in 1900, 17,318,556. From these we see that the population has nearly doubled in the last twenty years.

11. *What is the capital of Brazil?*

The Federal capital of Brazil is its largest and most important city, Rio de Janeiro. Many Brazilians wonder why New York City is not the capital of the United States. Many want to move the capital to the center of the country, in the State of Goyaz, measures having been taken even to select the site and survey it. But there is no immediate danger, or even remote one of transferring the Federal Capital from its beautiful location in Rio de Janeiro.

The population of Rio de Janeiro in 1920 was 1,157,873, and it is a very cosmopolitan and modern city. It has many miles of beautifully paved streets, is one of the best lighted cities in the world, and has one of the best street car systems to be found in the capital cities of the world, being far superior to that of Washington, D. C., or Paris, France.

12. *Name the other most important cities of the country.*

The most important cities of Brazil are all state capitals, and with one exception are coast cities. The exception is the second city of Brazil, Sao Paulo, with a population in 1920 of 579,000 people. It is the great industrial center of the nation, occupying a position in Brazil similar to that of Chicago in the United States.

Next in order of their importance and population are Bahia (Sao Salvador), Pernambuco (Recife), Para (Belem), and Porto Alegre. The two names of these various cities are given, the official names in parenthesis, and the generally used names according to the states of which they are the capitals.

These cities are all modern or are in the process of being modernized. They are being furnished with modern docking facilities for receiving the transatlantic shipping, which seeks their ports for international trade purposes.

13. *What are the principal products of Brazilian agriculture?*

In value they are: first, coffee; second, corn; third, cotton; fourth, rice; fifth, sugar; sixth, beans; seventh, mandioca; eighth, tobacco; ninth, cocoa; tenth, Irish potatoes. The live stock interests of Brazil are enormous. Brazil occupies, as to number of head, the following places in relation to the other countries of the world: cattle, fourth place; hogs, fourth place; sheep, tenth place; horses, fifth place; goats, fourth place; and mules, third place.

14. *What are the principal races of people found in the country?*

Brazil was occupied by a number of Indian tribes at the time of its discovery. There still exist in the country a number of tribes in their uncivilized state. Others were domesticated in the process of colonization.

The Portuguese people furnished the foundation stock. The Africans were brought in as slaves. From the processes of immigration, all Europe furnished many citizens to Brazil, especially Germany, Italy, and Spain.

There is no formal established race prejudice in Brazil and a process of amalgamation is going on that is extremely interesting. For a detailed discussion of this subject read Lord Bryce's "South America, Observations and Impressions".

15. *What is the status of education in Brazil?*

While absolutely accurate figures are not available, the illiterate of the country are generally put at 80%. This number is being enormously reduced each year as many of the states are making special efforts to reach all the children of school age, and through night schools to reach many adults.

A number of states have thoroughly modern public school systems, and while there is no university in Brazil, in the real sense of the word, there are colleges for all the higher branches of learning, except for classical subjects.

Education as a whole is one of the questions that is most in the minds of the people, and the statesmen of the country and special efforts are being made to better the schools and educational facilities.

16. *Is Brazil friendly to the United States, and why?*

Of all the South American countries Brazil appears to be the most friendly to the United States. There are many reasons

for this. The Brazilians as a whole admire the progress of the United States, especially in education and agriculture, and in government development. The country occupies more or less the same area and status in South America that the United States does in North America. No unfriendly acts against Brazil have been practiced by the United States. Diplomatic relations have always been most cordial. The United States is Brazil's best customer.

17. *Has Brazil made any notable progress in industry and manufacturing?*

The last twenty years have seen great strides of progress in manufactures and industry in Brazil. Many articles that were formerly imported altogether are now almost entirely manufactured in the country; as examples we might cite shoes and cotton cloths.

The mineral industries have not been developed, but in the near future much will be done, no doubt. Oil is being actively sought, and geologists of note have assured that it exists.

18. *What is the dominant religion of Brazil?*

The Roman Catholic religion is dominant and has been since the discovery of the country, and its early settlement.

There are about 500,000 Protestants in the country and pagan Indians in large numbers (variously estimated at from 500,000 to several millions).

Brazil is the only South American country with a resident Cardinal.

19. *Did Brazil have any part in the Great War?*

The country was the first in South America to declare war against Germany and while no active part was taken in the fighting, great efforts were made with shipping and agricultural exportations, to make a distinctive contribution to the allied cause.

20. *What is the principal river in Brazil?*

This question is easily answered by any school boy or girl, but few realize the magnitude of the river. Noticing a peculiar yellow river color to the water of the usually blue or green sea, we once asked a ship's captain what caused the change in color. He replied, "We are several hundred miles from the mouth of the Amazon river, but this is the effect of the current from that river." Large sea-going steamers can navigate more than a thousand miles up the river, and with its many tributaries the Amazon system forms probably the greatest river basin in the world. It flows through an almost uninhabited region that is destined, without doubt, to furnish dwelling places for untold millions in the future.

21. *What are the other most important Brazilian rivers?*

Few countries on the globe are as well provided with running waters as Brazil. There are, among many others, especially to

be mentioned the great systems of the Rio Sao Francisco, and the Rio Grande. We passed on the train the divide of the two basins, water from one side flowing east and north from the heart of the state of Minas Geraes towards the outlet in North Brazil; the other side of the hill sending its waters west and south to finally reach the ocean between Argentine and Uruguay.

These great systems mean fertile valleys, navigable waterways, and immense falls and rapids where potential electric power exists by the millions of horse power.

22. *What is the climate of Brazil?*

From the tropical equatorial north of Brazil climate, as we go south we find, semi-tropical, and temperate. In the heart of the interior in Central Brazil, states of Minas Geraes, Sao Paulo, Parana, Goyaz, and Matto Grosso, wherever the altitude is sufficiently high, we find a semi-tropical, or temperate-tropical climate that is really remarkable, and as good as is found in the world.

The plants and trees that flourish in both zones seem to meet on common ground, apples with bananas, oranges with peaches, etc. Where the proper attention is given to modern hygiene, conditions are as healthy as could possibly be desired. The country is particularly free from the atmospheric disturbances so common in the United States; cyclones are unknown, and floods rarely do harm. The year is divided into rainy and dry seasons, rather than into a distinct winter and summer season.

23. *How accessible is Brazil to the United States?*

Two steamship companies maintain twice a month service of first-class boats to Brazil. The U. S. Shipping boats make the trip in twelve days to Rio de Janeiro. If a stop was made at Pernambuco the country would be reached in about eight to nine days.

In pre-war days the trip usually took seventeen to nineteen days.

24. *Name something of special beauty in Brazil.*

This question could be answered in many ways, but after a residence of many years in Brazil, our answer would certainly be putting Rio de Janeiro in first place. No city in the world can boast of a more beautiful natural setting than this one. And man has done his share in making these beauties accessible, at the same time bringing them under harmonious control for the making of a modern city. If we could imagine Washington with a magnificent bay, and towering mountains of gray granite coming right down to the water's edge, and the evergreen verdure of a tropical climate, we might begin to have some conception of the Rio setting.

The only way to appreciate it is seeing it, because word pictures, or even photographs fall far short of the true picture.

25. *Who was the most prominent Brazilian of modern times?*

On May the first, 1923, Dr. Ruy Barbosa, Federal Senator, and world prominent lawyer, jurist and statesman died. Of extraordinary intellectual capacity, Dr. Barbosa, at the Hague and in international law, had made himself an outstanding figure. In his own country he had always combated error in civil life and in government, and although a candidate several times for the presidency of the republic, he was always defeated as being in opposition to the established monopolizing political situation.

As time goes on, the country, and the world, will come to more and more appreciate the intellectual prowess of the really great mind and man.

The Why of Protestant Missions in Brazil?

As a rule there is a very marked difference in the interest manifested in the United States as to missionary effort in the Orient and Africa, as compared to that of Latin America. It is natural that the romantic glamour of the very different peoples of the Orient should excite greater curiosity. On the other hand, when one becomes fully informed as to conditions in Latin America, one's interest is greatly increased. A number of questions have been included in this part which might apply to religious conditions in any other Latin American country, but many conditions brought about by the Roman Catholic faith are common to all these countries. To have any adequate comprehension as to the needs of evangelical missions it is absolutely necessary that one should know something of the doctrines and teachings of the Roman Church. The replies given are not from the standpoint of a theologian, but from that of a practical observer, who has been living sixteen years in Brazil.

1. *What is meant by the Roman Catholic Church?*

Many young people brought up in the South are entirely ignorant as to what the Roman Catholic Church really is. The reply must be very simple, and we will say that it is the Church that gives obedience to the Holy See, headed by the Pope, in the city of Rome, Italy, recognizing his final authority.

2. *What is the Pope?*

The Pope is the visual head of the Roman Catholic Church, elected to this office by the Cardinals, for life tenancy. He is considered the direct successor to St. Peter, and to hold absolute authority over the Roman Church and all its adherents, in questions of doctrine, ecclesiastical matters, and of church administration. His authority is supposed to go even further, and he is supposed to have absolute authority in all matters spiritual, to the point of including or excluding souls from salvation. No person or persons or branch of the Holy Catholic Church which does not give allegiance to the Pope is considered as part of the Roman Catholic Church.

3. *What is the Roman Catholic attitude toward the Bible?*

The Bible, while admittedly the Holy Scriptures, is entirely withheld from the people in Brazil. In our many years of residence in Brazil, we have seen two Roman Catholic copies of the Bible. The only edition of which we have been able to find out anything is a beautiful two volume set, illustrated, and so expensive as to be entirely out of reach of the masses. It is the doctrine of the Church that only the Church itself, as represented by its priests can interpret the Bible, but the priests are grossly ignorant of the Bible and its contents. This is one of the fundamental differences between the churches, Protestant and Catholic. In

one everything possible is done to encourage the people to know and love the Word of God, and in the other everything possible is done to keep the people from knowing and freely interpreting the Bible.

4. *What is its attitude towards Christ?*

While recognizing Christ as the Son of God, in practice at least, He is not considered the sufficient Saviour of Mankind. In the minds of the most of the Roman Catholics with whom we have had dealings, they have a very hazy idea of Christ and His mission on earth. Many substitutes are offered, and no member of the Church is given certainty of his salvation. One of the archbishops in Brazil recently died, and he requested all the priests to say mass for the good of his soul, and left money to pay for 200 masses. He certainly felt no guarantee as to his salvation.

5. *What are teachings about the Virgin Mary?*

In the hearts of most of the Catholics, the Virgin Mary occupies a position of much greater importance than Christ. Her powers are believed by most earnest Catholics to be equal or superior to those of Christ himself. A number of absurd doctrines are taught by the Church in regard to the Virgin Mary. There is not space available to enter into a fuller discussion of this subject, but it is of vital importance in considering the true conditions of the spiritual life of the Roman Catholics.

6. *What is intercession of the Saints?*

The Roman Catholic Church, through an enormous and excessively expensive ritual establishes in official positions of *sainthood*, those of the dead whom they so intend. They take it to the immensely absurd point of making a saint of Joan of Arc, after having burned her at the stake for heresy. These saints are all supposed to have miraculous power and are worshipped throughout the Church. The number is getting to be legion, so the average Catholic knows only a few of the more important ones.

Prayers are made always through the intercession of the saints, and especially the Virgin Mary, and not through our Lord Jesus Christ as we are taught to make them in the Holy Word.

7. *What about image worship?*

Of all these saints, of the Virgin Mary, and of Christ the Roman Churches have no end of images. To these images they give worship, kneeling before them, praying to them, kissing them and doing many other acts of worship. When questioned the reply is that the worship is to the person represented by the image, but the ignorant masses recognize no such fine points of distinction.

While the Roman Catholic Bibles have the second commandment, the catechisms that are taught to the children do not

have it. This shows the inconsistency of a Church that says it accepts the Bible, but which has practices prohibited by the Word of God.

8. *What is purgatory?*

The doctrines of the Roman Church teach of an intermediate place between the Heaven of the saved, and the Hades of the lost — purgatory. The souls of the dead go to this mid-way place, and may be gradually brought into the full rights of the saved, through the offices of the church, in the way of masses. The masses are said for stipulated sums, so money becomes an essential part of final salvation. This is apparently the most absurd of the doctrines of the Church, and is not stressed so much now as formerly.

9. *What are the teachings about marriage?*

Marriage is considered a sacrament of the Church, along with six others, claimed to have been instituted by Christ. Civil marriage is not recognized, and as the civil government does not recognize as valid religious wedding ceremonies, there arises no end of complications. Of course all would come to an end if the Church did as the Protestant Churches do, only perform the religious ceremony after the presentation of the civil marriage certificate.

The priests are not allowed to marry, and their moral life stands open to much criticism, and puts them in such a position that they cannot inspire or demand moral purity.

10. *What is the attitude toward Sunday observance?*

It is not necessary to discuss this from the Brazilian standpoint. It is only necessary to observe what happens in Roman Catholic communities in the United States. After attendance at the early Sunday morning mass, the rest of the day is for recreation, business or what not. The fourth commandment bears no weight whatever.

In many cities of Brazil stores are closed on Sunday, but this is because of the demands of the clerks, and not for religious reasons.

11. *What effect has public opinion on the Roman Church?*

The fact that so many customs are seen in common practice in South America that public opinion would not tolerate in the United States shows how the Roman Catholic Church is molded to accommodate public opinion. Where she dominates and has everything her own way, conditions as to morality and spirituality have reached an extremely low level. Where there is an influence for the better, and in competition to her corrupt practices another front is shown. For this reason many people at home are not disposed to believe conditions exist so bad as they really are.

12. *How long has the Roman Catholic Church dominated in Brazil?*

Right from the first settlement of Brazil the Romish Church has had absolute sway, with full power as the State religion. The picture that is most often seen in Brazilian homes is similar to famous painting of the landing of the pilgrims, but shows the first mass said on the seashore of Brazil.

13. *What has been the result of this dominance?*

One of the most noticeable results of the Roman dominance has been the fostering of ignorance, or, in other words, the lack of educational development. It is not to the interest of the Church that high intellectual attainments shall be achieved by the masses, so little or nothing has been done by the Church for educational advances. The lax moral standards are directly attributable to the Roman Church, for with her absolute dominance during many centuries, she could have inspired the highest moral character and development of this people.

The progress Brazil has obtained has been in spite of the Roman Church, and not with its help.

14. *When was separation from the State and the Church accomplished?*

Some of the South American countries still have state religion, that of the Roman Catholic Church, but fortunately, when Brazil became a republic in 1889, religious liberty in its fullest sense was established. This liberty is oftentimes compromised by the scheming of the Romish authorities, and because they say they are *the Church of the Brazilian people*. Nevertheless the laws of the country, and the very constitution itself, guarantees religious liberty. Now that the people at large have seen the advantages of the separation of state and religion, it is not likely they will ever make the backward step of establishing a state religion again.

15. *How did the Protestant Churches get established before this separation?*

The early efforts, begun about a century ago, for evangelical advance in Brazil, were made with enormous difficulties, and as long as the Brazil Empire lasted, many rights were denied these churches. They could own their own buildings, but these could not have towers or in any way look like the Roman Catholic churches, nor could they use church bells. Even so a number of Protestant missions were established before the coming of the republic, and we still have missionaries on the field that began their efforts during the last days of the Empire.

16. *What effect has separation of church and state had on modern life of the nation?*

Freed from the shackles of a state religion, many have begun to think for themselves. This thinking, unguided or improperly guided, has opened new avenues of thought, and many have drifted into a state of irreligion or religious apathy. Among the higher intellectual classes many are free thinkers. Spiritualism

and positivism have made some progress. These do not seem to bother the Roman Church, but the progress made under the new regime by the evangelical forces has been notable, and the Church is very much worried over it. Many occasions of persecution and oppression have occurred, but liberty is progressive, and cannot be held back, once tasted.

17. *Have Protestant missions been a success?*

Without a doubt, the missionary efforts of the Protestant churches have been successful. The total evangelical population is nearly half a million. The Presbyterian national church is practically an independent body, entirely self-governing. The missionaries help, but do not overshadow in any way the native Church. If the missionaries were obliged to abandon the country today the Presbyterian Church in Brazil would live on and grow and propagate itself. The same is probably true of the other denominations here established.

18. *How have they established their work?*

The greatest work of the Protestant missions has been the evangelical preaching of the Word, and the spreading of the printed gospel, especially the Bible. Some very fine educational work has been established. Very little medical work has been done, and it will never be so important a branch of the work as it has been in the Orient, because most of the Brazilian cities have good physicians. All of the denominations doing missionary work have stressed the educational side, and the results are noteworthy. The Brazilian ministry is of a high order, and among it are many outstanding men. The Presbyterian policy is to turn over to the Brazilians themselves any and all work, as fast as they are in position to man and develop it. The missionaries work in harmony with the Brazilians, in the most cordial relations.

The larger educational institutions have high school courses, and there are two professional schools, an engineering and an agricultural college. Just at present the attitude of the official educational circles is not so favorable to the missionary institutions as it has been in the past, but it is hoped that this is a transitory condition.

19. *What are the denominations that have mission work in Brazil?*

The Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Episcopalian, and Congregationalist (English) have missions. The largest missionary efforts just at present are being put forth by the Baptists and the Methodists, although the Brazilian Presbyterian Church is the strongest from the native standpoint.

20. *How do they cooperate?*

The Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists work in thorough harmony, and the others to more or less extent, all through the Brazilian Committee of the Cooperation in Latin America movement. There is a union seminary in Rio, in which

four churches have a part. The Methodists have a fine publishing house which is serving several denominations in a very fine way. As a rule frank cooperation prevails.

21. *Are there many open doors and strong appeals for workers and equipment?*

As strong as the work already done is, and the great development of the native Church, the task is only begun. Many appeals come for workers and the unoccupied fields are as numerous, or more so, than the occupied ones. One of the great tasks, as yet not undertaken, is the evangelizing of the native Indian population. The Committee on Cooperation and the Presbyterian Church have made a study of the needs and conditions, but as yet the work has not been undertaken. Many schools should be established and many evangelists put in the field.

22. *How many Missions does the Southern Presbyterian Church have in Brazil?*

We have three Missions. The North Brazil Mission operates principally in the State of Pernambuco. The West Brazil Mission operates principally in the State of Sao Paulo and partly in the State of Minas. The East Brazil Mission has as its field the great central southern part of the State of Minas Geraes. The North Brazil Mission does educational and evangelistic work, the West Brazil only evangelistic, and the East Brazil, until recently, almost altogether educational. It now has five missionaries giving full time to evangelistic work.

23. *What special signs of life does the Presbyterian Church show?*

A progressive campaign similar to that of our home Church, to cover a period of seven years, has been launched in two synods.

This campaign is designed to intensify all the work and development of the Church, and although only begun a few months ago, has aroused much enthusiasm.

24. *Are Missions to Brazil as necessary as to the heathen countries?*

Recently a Brazilian pastor made the statement in his pulpit that missions to Brazil were more important than to heathen countries because to be led in error was worse than not to have known the Gospel.

Thoughtful students of the world's needs of the Gospel will all agree that Brazil makes a very special appeal. Will you heed it by prayer, giving of means or life?

